



**BOROUGH OF BUCKINGHAM.**

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# ANNUAL REPORT

of the

**MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH**

for the Year

**1945.**



# BOROUGH OF BUCKINGHAM.

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TOWN HALL,  
BUCKINGHAM.

*To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of  
Buckingham.*

Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting my Annual Report to the Minister of Health. After an absence of six years, during which I gained a tremendous amount of public health experience, it is the first opportunity I have had since demobilisation to record the changes which have occurred during this passage of time. In your Council Chamber, I miss several well-remembered faces, including that of Mr. Chilvers, the late Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor. Having worked in close Association with Mr. Chilvers for a number of years, I should like to pay tribute to his great help. His broad shoulders, aided by a jovial disposition, willingly and cheerfully, undertook any task that came along, so that he was a first-class official.

In my capacity of School Medical Inspector for North Buckinghamshire, I have gathered the strong impression that during the war years, the child population has become better fed and clad than ever before. A good wholesome plain, well balanced dietry, without the appetite being jaded by unnecessary luxuries, has improved the standard of child physique in the Borough.

Four main problems have come to the foreground in 1945—housing, water, sewerage and maternity home. Active steps have been taken by the Borough to solve the first three, and although the question of maternity homes is not the responsibility of the Borough, yet so urgent has the need become that it has been considered meet to stimulate the Maternity and Child Welfare Authority to take immediate action.

My thanks are due to the members of the Council and to the office staff for their co-operation. Mr. Chilver's successors, Messrs. Stevens and Makepeace, have already proved themselves to be able and pleasant colleagues.

A. MICHAEL CRITCHLEY.

**A. Vital Statistics.**

	1945	1944
Area (in acres) ... ..	6723	6723
Population (Registrar-General's estimate)...	3527	3949
Number of Inhabited Houses (end of year)	1175	1175
Rateable value ... ..	£22,653	£22,300
Rate per £1 ... ..	18/-	12/6
Sum represented by a penny rate ... ..	£91	£91/1/2
Births :		
M.      F.		
Legitimate ... ..	30    26	56    70
Illegitimate ... ..	4     4	8     5
Birth-rate per 1,000 population ... ..	18.15	18.9
"      "      "      (Bucks) ..	16.5	
"      "      (England & Wales)	16.56	
M.      F.		
Still-Births ... ..	1     1	2     1
Deaths ... ..	21    28	49    48
Deaths per 1,000 population ... ..	13.8	12.2
"      "      "      (Bucks) ...	11	
"      "      "      (England & Wales)	11.4	
"      from Puerperal Causes ... ..		
Maternal Mortality rate ... ..		
"      "      (England & Wales)	1.79	
Infantile Mortality :		
Death-rate for Infants under 1 year ...	93.8	28.5
"      Legitimate Infants      "      ...	71	28.5
"      Illegitimate Infants      "      ...	250	
"      for Bucks ... ..	32.9	
"      for England & Wales ... ..	46	
Deaths from Measles ... ..		
"      Whooping Cough ... ..		
"      Diarrhoea (under 2 yrs. of age)		

PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF DEATH :	1945			1944		
	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.
Influenza ... ..						
Respiratory Tuberculosis ..						
Other Tuberculosis ... ..		1	1			
Cancer ... ..	7	4	11	4	5	9
Diabetes ... ..						
Cerebral Hemorrhage ... ..		7	7	2	3	5
Heart Diseases ... ..	5	5	10	5	6	11
Other Circulatory Diseases ...		1	1			
Bronchitis ... ..	1	1	2		3	3
Pneumonia ... ..	1	1	2	2	2	4
Other Respiratory Diseases ...						
Digestive Diseases ... ..	2	1	3	4	4	8
Nephritis ... ..	1		1			
Puerperal Pyrexia ... ..						
Congenital Causes ... ..	1	1	2	1		1
Violence (including Suicide) ...				2	2	4
Other defined Diseases... ..	3	6	9	1	2	3
TOTALS ... ..	21	28	49	21	27	48

## B. General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

### PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

*Mayor*—Lord Addington.

*Chairman*—Alderman A. E. Busby.

Aldermen C. W. Cantell, F. Holton.

Councillors H. Cornwall, W. A. Griffiths, J. G. Denny, G. W. Downer, E. T. Hawes, Hon. F. S. Hubbard, W. S. Pringle, O. Rodwell, P. J. Small, S. G. Williams, T. H. Smith, L. W. Hull.

### PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS.

#### *Medical Officer of Health.*

Janet C. Ronaldson, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (Edinburgh).  
(Temporary until 31st August, 1945).

*Then* A. Michael Critchley, M.D., D.P.H.

#### *Sanitary Inspector.*

George Belson Chilvers, F.I.S.E., Cert. Royal San. Institute.  
(Died July, 1945).

Bruce W. E. Makepeace, A.M.Inst.B.E., M.R.San.I.  
(Appointed September, 1945).

## 2. LABORATORY FACILITIES.

The arrangement made with the Emergency Public Health Laboratory Service of the School of Pathology, Oxford to perform pathological investigations continues.

3. AMBULANCE FACILITIES remain as heretofore.

4. NURSING IN THE HOME remain as heretofore.

## 5. CLINICAL AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

(a) *Maternity and Child Welfare Centre*.—A centre at Congregational Chapel Hall has held bi-monthly sessions with the Medical Officer in attendance once a month. Although the amenities of the centre were far from ideal, good work has been carried out therein and attendance has been satisfactory.

(b) *Orthopædic Clinic*.—Sessions have been held twice monthly and have been staffed by nurses from the Wingfield-Morris Hospital.

(c) *Diphtheria Clinic*.—Monthly Sessions were at Whale Yard under difficult conditions.

(d) *Tuberculosis Dispensary*.—The County Tuberculosis Officer was in attendance once monthly at the dispensary in Whale Yard.

(e) *Dental Clinic*.—A room in the County Clinic, Whale Yard, was used as the School Dentist's Surgery.

(f) *Venereal Diseases*.—Cases were attended at the various clinics in Buckinghamshire and neighbouring counties.

## 6. HOSPITALS.

No change in the Hospitals serving this area has occurred since the last report.

## C. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

### 1. WATER.

In accordance with the Ministry of Health Circular 28/46, the following information is given :—

(i.) *Quality of Water*.—Apart from excessive hardness and slight pollution of the Akeley supply by surface water, the quality of the water has been excellent. Defects have been discovered in both water mains and sewers so that it has been considered advisable to chlorinate water supplies to prevent a possible outbreak of water borne disease from pollution through any flaw remaining undetected.



(ii.) *Quantity of Water.*—The position regarding the amount of water has been, and still is at the time of writing, serious.

With the demand for water the same, there has been a falling off in the quantity at the Maids Moreton works, and a diminution of the Akeley supply. Owing to lack of pressure in the mains, the Bourton and Tingewick Road areas have been short of water at times. The latter shortage has been considered to be caused by several factors including a bottle-neck in the water system and the fact that it is only gravity fed.

The daily consumption of water per head averaged 38 gallons, a figure, which in view of the few large industrial consumers of water, was excessive. The Borough Surveyor, in a report on the water situation, estimated that 40,000 gallons were wasted daily. Steps have been taken to investigate and remedy this wastage.

The Buckingham mains have been connected with those of the North Bucks Joint Water Board, thus ensuring a reserve source of water for both Water Authorities should the necessity ever arise.

## 2. DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

(a) *Water Carriage System.*—Evidence was found that some sewers were defective, whilst others did not connect up with the main system. These faults were remedied as and when found.

The Gawcott sewage disposal system has functioned well throughout the year and caused no anxiety.

Before the war it was recognised that the main Buckingham sewage works needed renovations as it was not up to standards, so a Ministry of Health enquiry was held to investigate a scheme brought forward by the Consultant Engineers. Since that time, the works have deteriorated, becoming worse than in pre-war days. The position was summarised in a report, thus:—"The Pumping Station is out of date. The settlement tanks are small and of obsolete design and the farm area is sewage sick, so that a satisfactory affluent cannot be obtained." In fact the present sewage works constitute a potential nuisance from smell, fly breeding, and river pollution. The gravity of the situation has been brought to the notice of the Council, and steps have been taken to obtain sanction to remedy.

In the meantime, the sewage has been chlorinated at the Pumping Station in order to mitigate the nuisance to some extent.

(b) *Refuse Disposal.*—Owing to the shortage of labour and fuel, incineration of refuse has been abandoned, instead of which, rubbish was taken by horse-drawn vehicles to Lenborough Road. Complaints have been received regarding the infrequency

of collection. With the present system, an accelerated collection is impracticable, although it would be improved by provision of a more centrally situated controlled tip. If the amenities of a Borough are desired in place of those of a Rural District, a motor refuse collector is a necessity and will provide a more satisfactory and sanitary service, but at the same time will be more costly.

### 3. RIVERS AND STREAMS.

Some pollution of the Ouse has occurred, but has not been sufficiently severe to lead to official action.

### 4. PUBLIC MORTUARY.

The Mortuary continued to serve the needs of the Borough and the Buckingham Rural District. A few minor repairs and alterations have become desirable.

### 5. SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

No action has been taken to maintain the bathing pool in the river which in the past, although far from satisfactory, nevertheless has been fairly well frequented. In this district, there is a great need for a proper swimming bath with a safe water supply.

### 6. FACTORIES.

The Paint Factory gave rise to complaints of smell from time to time. The management has co-operated in steps to minimise the complaints by the installation of extraction and condensation plants.

The Gas Works caused complaints regarding smell and pollution of the river. The company has endeavoured to prevent this fouling of the water course.

The Wilts United Dairy which, during the war had increased its range of production to include the manufacture of dried and condensed milk, dehydrated soup, rose hip syrup, tea, sugar and milk pack, and blood plasma, produced during 1945, dried and condensed milk, and blood plasma.

### 7. SCHOOLS.

The sanitary condition and cleanliness of the Primary and Infants' Schools have deteriorated, and there was a noticeable feeling in the Borough that modern buildings in a more suitable site were desirable when post-war conditions become more settled.



## D. Housing.

In pre-war days the housing situation in the Borough was not good. Since then, six years of overcrowding and lack of maintenance have resulted in a large number of houses becoming unfit. However, so great has been the demand for houses, that these unfit buildings have of necessity been tenanted.

During the year, site preparation for an estate which will embrace 250 houses ultimately, was started.

## E. Summary of work of Sanitary Inspector during the Year.

### 1. GENERAL.

Inspections made	...	...	...	...	743
Unfit food	...	...	...	...	11
Choked drains	...	...	...	...	15
Nuisances ...	...	...	...	...	11

### 2. SLAUGHTER HOUSE.

The Government Slaughter House at the premises of Mr. J. W. Scrafton, is the only place at which slaughtering is permitted, and is under the control of the Ministry of Food. Regular inspection of carcasses is made, in all, 143 visits.

### 3. ON REGISTER.

Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	5
Dairies, Cowsheds, etc.	...	...	...	...	33
Factories and Workshops	...	...	...	...	61

## F. Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and Other Diseases.

### 1. GENERAL.

Apart from an epidemic of Measles during the summer months, the Borough has been very free from infectious disease.

### 2. NUMBER OF NOTIFIED CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	2
Measles ...	...	...	...	...	82

### 3. CANCER.

Eleven deaths were reported as being due to Cancer.

#### 4. PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS.

No action has been taken under Section 66 of the Public Health Act, 1925.

#### 5. TUBERCULOSIS.

There have been no deaths from phthisis or other forms of tuberculosis.

*New Cases.*—No notifications.

A. MICHAEL CRITCHLEY.

*Medical Officer of Health.*



